

ROY STRONG



The English Renaissance Miniature

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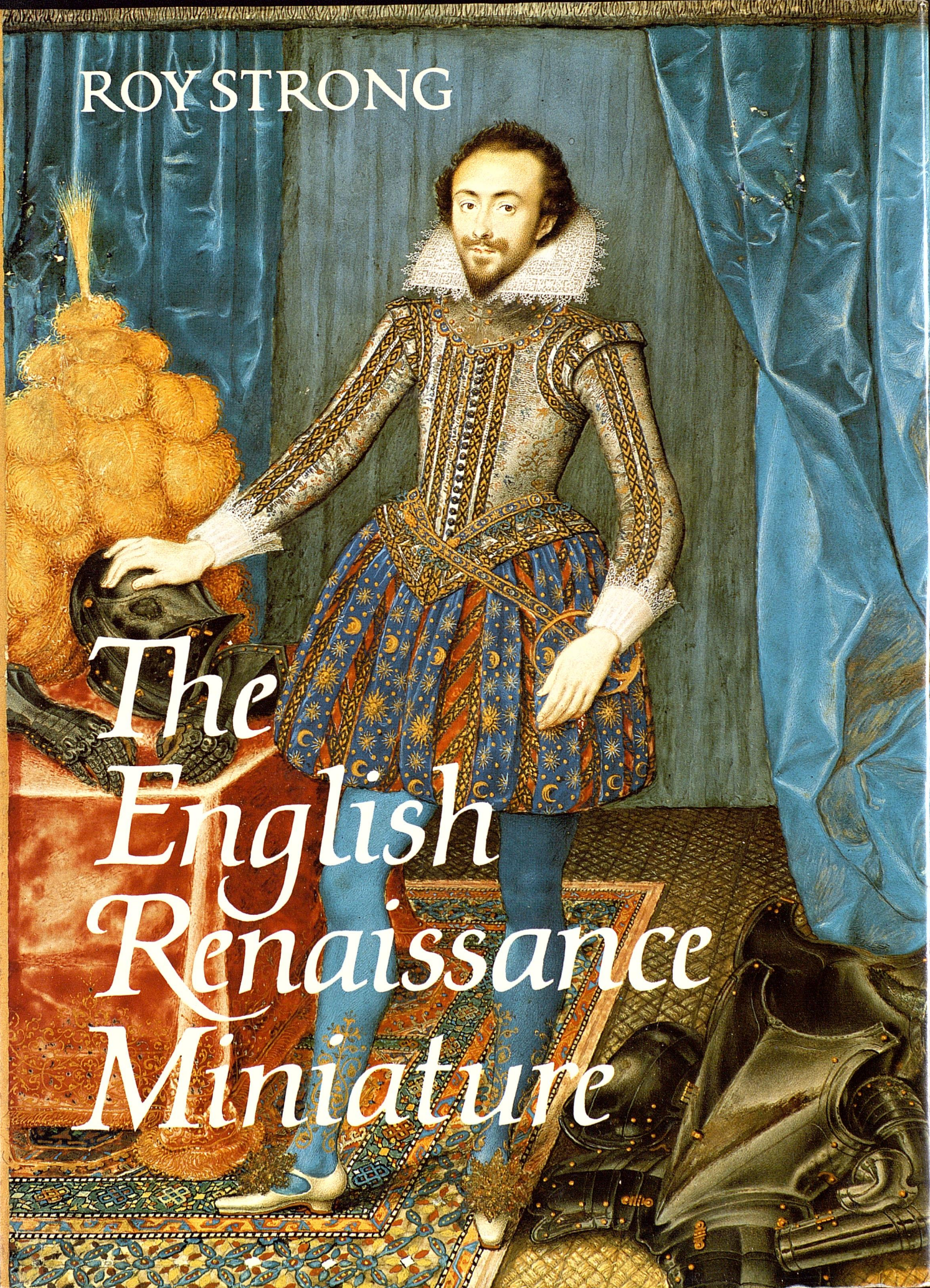
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Miniature*

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# The English Renaissance Miniature

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THIS is the first comprehensive survey of England's unique contribution to the art of the Renaissance: the portrait miniature.

Arising out of the technical traditions of medieval manuscript illumination and inspired by the art of the Valois court, the portrait miniature, or limning (from 'illumination') as it was then called, was to remain for a century the ideal vehicle for the expression of the cult of the Crown, an art form peculiarly suited to the ruling classes of post-Reformation England.

Sir Roy Strong has had the unprecedented, and probably unrepeatable, opportunity of studying, under strict laboratory conditions in the Conservation Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum, the surviving English portrait miniatures painted between *c.* 1525 and *c.* 1620. Accompanying this with a rigorous study of the available documentary evidence, he has been able to re-assess the work of Nicholas Hilliard, publish for the first time that of Lucas Hornebolte, and present Isaac Oliver as a daring and original artist.

Limning is revealed to be only one of the extraordinary talents of these and other artists discussed in this book: their ability to work in other media as well, painting on panel or canvas, decorating tombs or designing engravings and woodcuts is for the first time examined and accorded the significance it warrants. The central thread of the book, however, is the miniatures themselves which, after four centuries, still hold a hypnotic fascination for the viewer because of their startling immediacy: they allow us to peer at the faces of Tudor England as it were through a keyhole, catching glimpses, to use Hilliard's own words, of those 'lovely graces, witty smilings, and stolen glances which suddenly like lightning pass'.

*With 255 illustrations, 8 in colour*

*On the jacket, Front: ISAAC OLIVER. Richard Sackville, Third Earl of Dorset. (Victoria and Albert Museum.)*

*Back: NICHOLAS HILLIARD. Queen Elizabeth. Actual size. (Victoria and Albert Museum.)*

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London 83

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THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE  
MINIATURE

with 255 illustrations, 8 in colour



THAMES AND HUDSON

*For A. L. Rowse*

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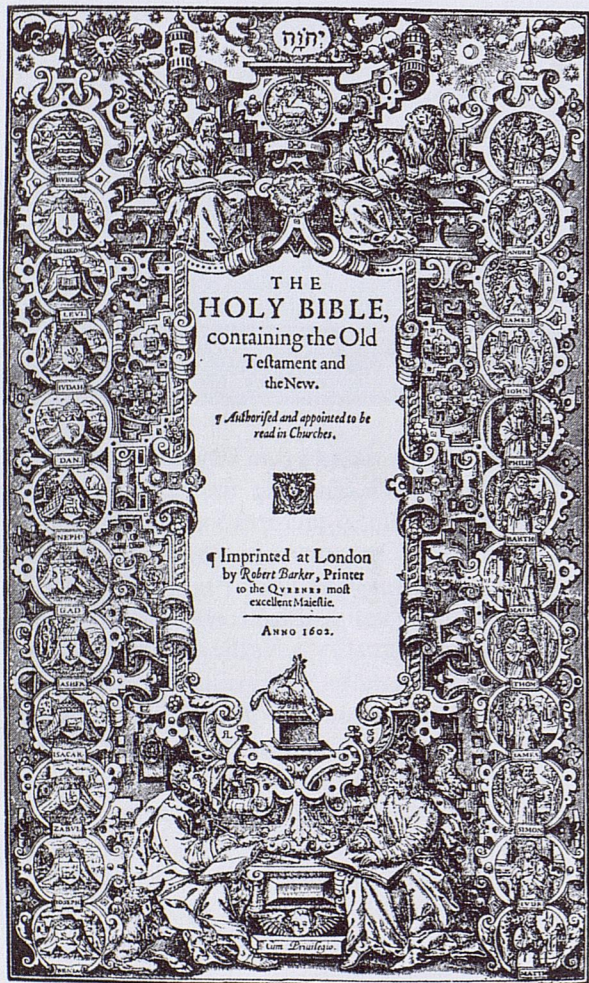
Filmset by Tameside Filmsetting Ltd,  
Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire.  
Printed and bound in Japan by Dai Nippon

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### Rowland Lockey

Hilliard's apprentice in the 1580s, he practised as a miniaturist, painter and designer from c.1590 to 1616.